

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JUSTICE OF GOD.

"Shall mortal man be more just than God?"—Job iv. part of the 17th verse.

This is a text from which I lately heard a Universalist minister in this place take his discourse, to support his doctrines against Presbyterianism & Co. He began by stating the rank and condition that mankind held in the scale of animated beings; his relation to, and dependence on God; and finally pronounced all those who deny the existence of God, not sincere. He next dwelt upon the power and universal goodness of God; observing that his relations and feelings towards us were as a parent towards his children. He concluded by noticing the general fact, that parents wish to render their children happy, and only punish them for the purpose of correcting their faults; consequently, God, as the parent of us all, does the same; and in this particular is more just than man; that all the toil and misery which we suffer, is the parental chastisement that God inflicts, to make us wiser and better; and finally, that the Bible did not contain the doctrine of election and eternal punishment. This was the substance of his discourse.

Though the doctrines of the Universalists may be a little more liberal than those of some other sects, yet like them, the preacher above alluded to, perhaps, dared not proceed to the *full* extent of his argument, and shew *all* that his God does to mankind, because it would prove too much; it would prove most conclusively that man is more just than the Christian God. The parent of a family of children ought to do all in his power to make them virtuous, and at the same time give them a sufficient education in all the necessary branches of knowledge; so that as children they may be his delight, and when grown up, the pillars and ornament of society; acting virtuous and just as they would have others do to them. And I think I may say without the fear of contradiction, that there are few parents, whether rich or poor, elevated or debased, who would not, if it depended on their *will*, educate children in this manner. Suppose mankind had always been educated under the influence of such virtuous feelings and just habits, where should we see children and parents quarrelling together? Where should we find children practising all kinds of crimes, and becoming hardened as they grow older, till they should end their days in prison, or on the gallows? If, I say, parents had the power to make the dispositions of their children, we should see nothing of all this. But God, according to the Christians, possesses this power over all mankind, who are as his children; and yet

the present condition of all mankind is evidence of this truth, *that man is more just than God.*

The earthly parent, who should know the dispositions of his children were liable to be corrupted by the temptations which surround them, would use the requisite means of protecting them from it to keep them in the paths of virtue: and would not that parent be thought unwise and unkind, who should say, "Children, I give you full liberty to conduct as you please, right or wrong. Go on to multiply crime and debase your species;—render yourselves miserable here, and perpetuate that misery from generation to generation; and when you arrive at years of maturity, I will have a lamb sacrificed as an atonement to myself for the crimes that you have committed, instead of using the power which I possess in making your conduct as it ought to have been." What earthly parents acting thus would be thought in their right mind? Mankind, the preacher says, stand in relation to God as children to parents; yet himself offers an atonement for the sins of his children, instead of curing the evils for which he is supposed to offer the atonement. The greatest benefit that mankind could receive, would be that the Christian God should exercise his power according to his supposed abilities, and exercise the same regard towards mankind that an earthly parent does with regard to his children; and till he does, *man will be more just than the God of the Christians.*

Let any man of common sense, Christian or Mahomedan, solemnly ask himself this question:—"If I had the power to possess all mankind with such a love of virtue and justice, that they would need no punishment of death, imprisonment, or penalties of any kind to render them honest, would I not do it?" The answer must be, "yes." But God, according to the Christian, possesses this power over all mankind; thus establishing the unavoidable conclusion (acknowledge it they will not) that as long as he permits them to exist in their present condition, *the earthly is more just than the heavenly parent.*

YOUNG ATTICUS.

JUDAISM.

MR. EDITOR—I consider the Bible as a compound of kingcraft, and priestcraft. The Old Testament was written by the priests, with no other view than to render the Jews submissive to themselves and to whom they might please to give the government. If we examine it we shall find this to be the case. Can it be said that Moses was a disinterested patriot? that, like Washington, he delivered his country from slavery from the purest motives, or that he delivered it from the Egyptian yoke to subject it to his own family? It was with this view that he anointed Aaron high priest over Israel. When they arrived at the promised land, it was divided among eleven tribes only; the tribe of Levi was not to work for their living, they were not to cultivate the soil; they were to be supported in idleness by the people; they were to be at the head of the government; they were to make and depose judges, rulers, and kings. It was calculated to, and had the effect of reducing the people to abject submission. If they failed for a moment to obey their priests, the most terrible judgments were threatened them; not only the people

but even kings stood in awe of them ; for if a king failed to follow their directions, he was sure to be deposed, if not slain. To support them, the people were taxed one seventh part of their time, and one tenth part of their substance. Besides new moons, solemn feasts, passovers, jubilees, &c. and innumerable sacrifices, sin offerings, peace offerings, and wave offerings, the first-born of man and beast, and the first fruits of the earth were to be dedicated to the Lord, or in other words, given to the priests. Moses, when he wrote the first chapter of Genesis, had no other end in view than the establishment of the fourth commandment. The fourth commandment says, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day ; six days shalt thou labor and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gate ; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it." To pass over the absurdity of the Almighty's being tired and resting himself, and being so thankful for rest that he hallowed the day on which he rested, the day on which he rested was not the seventh day ; for the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies were not created until the third or fourth day. We all know that day and night is caused by the rising and setting of the sun ; and I cannot conceive how there could be day or night before the sun, moon, and the heavenly bodies were created.

It cannot be said that the Jews enjoyed happiness as a nation, for no sooner had they ceased destroying the nations around them, than they turned their arms against one another. Their history presents but little else than a series of wars, rebellions, treasons and massacres. The system is not only dangerous to the political happiness of any nation who may adopt it as a standard of right and wrong, but it is dangerous to the morals of private persons ; for can a believer do better than to imitate the conduct of those favorites of the Deity who went to heaven as soon as they died ? For instance, Lot : he was such a righteous man that the Lord sent two angels to remove him from a city which he intended to destroy : and yet Lot offered to prostitute his two virgin daughters to a mob, and afterwards committed incest with them. Elijah was an inspired man, and yet he bathed his hands in the blood of some hundreds of his fellow prophets. Samuel was another inspired man, and yet he hewed a fellow being to pieces in cold blood. David, that holy usurper, who is represented as the peculiar favorite of Jehovah, ordered a young man who had put himself into his hands, trusting in his good faith, to be killed without judge or jury, because he had put Saul to death at Saul's own request ; although David was at that time actually at war with Saul, and in rebellion against him. David was such a holy man, that he was considered as worthy of being the father of the Messiah, although he committed the same crimes which that miserable wretch Strang did, who was hung in Albany.

Solomon is represented as being endowed with wisdom from on High, and yet he had one thousand wives and concubines, and oppressed the Jews with heavy taxes for the purpose of erecting costly and magnificent

temples and palaces. Would the Americans think that their legislators had much wisdom if they were to pursue the same course? There is hardly a character of any note in the Old Testament who did not commit at least one murder. These are but a few samples of immorality contained in this book. There are parts of it that are not fit to be read in public, and hardly in private. I now ask, is this a fit book to give criminals to read? Is it calculated to improve their morals? Will not a man who is confined in the State prison for bigamy, say that it is unjust to punish him for having two or three wives, when Solomon had a thousand? Will not a murderer on the scaffold say, that it is not right to hang him for killing one man, when David and a host of others slew thousands, and yet retained the favor of the Almighty?

Let us now turn to the New Testament, and hear what it says. "Every tree is known by its fruit. An evil tree bringeth not forth good fruit, neither doth a good tree bring forth evil fruit." Now what fruit has this tree brought forth? Has it brought forth good or evil? The Romans never prospered after the time of Constantine, in whose reign it may be said that they embraced Christianity. True, the empire had begun to decline before his time; but as it is a *Divine* religion, it might reasonably be expected that the *Divine* blessing would follow it? Has the Divine blessing followed it? When its ministers were in possession of absolute power in Europe, were the people happy and prosperous? I think not. At the present day, those countries in which priests have most power, the people are most miserable. Italy, Spain, and Portugal, have as fine climates and as fertile soils as any countries in Europe, and are the most miserable. In France and England they have less power, and the consequence is, that the people are more enterprising, and countries more prosperous. In this they have no part in the government, (and I hope they never will) and the consequence is that it is the most flourishing on the earth.

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

The author of the following strictures, is not without apprehension that he may excite the indignation of many worthy persons, whose zeal may catch fire at so free a disquisition, on what they have always been taught to esteem a sacred character; this is what he should be extremely sorry for, but a blind reverence not having had sufficient influence over him to make him read with his eyes shut, he has represented matters as they appear to him; giving his vouchers for every fact as he proceeds—he enters upon the inquiry from honest motives, and flatters himself that it will be acceptable to all who entertain adequate notions of the eternal rectitude of the Deity. Those who estimate a man's religion by his implicit faith, and think it their duty to stifle their living objections in compliance with the dead letter, (for objections they will have, and very strong ones too) will undoubtedly be shocked at this publication; such will produce numerous texts in opposition; but can *inspired* writings be inconsistent with themselves?

The design is to discover how far the general tenor of David's conduct entitles him to the character of *The Man after God's own Heart*—if he enjoys it justly, an examination, so far from sullyng his reputation,

will give it lustre; if he does not enjoy it justly, will sincere inquirers after truth regret being led to form a proper judgment where they have hitherto rested with a dissatisfied acquiescence? To form an idea of the rectitude of his principles, we can only inspect his actions—we have only to examine his life as contained in the Old Testament, where we shall find facts incontestible on which to found our opinion.

The author is aware of two formidable obstacles to his design.

I. The broken unconnected manner in which the history is transmitted to us, which renders it impossible to give a complete narrative of any period in it.

II. The partial representation of it, as being written by the Jews themselves.

In some measure to surmount these obstacles, the author assumes the liberty of giving *his* sense to the passages which seem to be obscure or misrepresented—this, he hopes, will not be denied him, so long as there is no appearance of a forced construction being put upon any of them, or of their being represented in any other light than what they would naturally appear in, if examined with the same freedom which is used in reading Tacitus, Rollin or Rapin, and which ought to be used towards all; but lest it should be thought that too great liberties are taken with the biblical writers, it may not be improper to mention, that innumerable instances might be produced to shew that the authority of *the Lord*, so continually quoted to sanctify every transaction, constituted, in general, nothing more than national phrases which obtained universally among so bigoted a people; one twelfth part of whom were appropriated to the priesthood.

Let no one then be so timid as to resign an inclination to satisfy just doubts, or prescribe limits to the exercise of his reasoning faculties—an honest desire to obtain truth will sanctify the most rigid scrutiny into every thing. The love of truth ought to supersede every other consideration; for every other consideration is inferior to it. Truth requires no tenderness, and scorns all subterfuges.

The first establishment of regal government among the Hebrews, was occasioned by the corrupt administration of Joel and Abiah, the two sons of Samuel; whom he had deputed to judge Israel in the decline of his life. (1 Sam. viii. 3.) The people, exasperated at the oppression they labored under, rose in a tumultuous manner, and applied to Samuel for redress; testifying a desire to experience a different mode of government; by peremptorily demanding a king. (1 Sam. viii. 5.) At this, however, Samuel was greatly displeased; not that his sons had tyrannised over the people, for of this he takes no manner of notice; neither exculpating them, nor promising the people redress; his chagrin was owing to the violent resumption of the supreme magistracy out of the hands of his family; a circumstance, for which he expresses the bitterest resentment. (v. 6, &c.) He consults the Lord; and not knowing else how the insurrection might terminate, in his name yields to their desires; promising them a king, with a vengeance to them. *For, says the Lord, they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me that I should not reign over them.* The people, notwithstanding, obstinately persisted in their demand, and ~~disregarded~~ not without a promise of compliance.

Samuel apparently chose the most impartial method of electing a king, which was by lot from among the people assembled by tribes ; but prudently pitches upon his man previous to the election ; as the whole tenor of his conduct manifests that he intended to give them a king, in name ; but to have one subordinate to his will. Opportunely for this purpose, Saul, a raw country lad, having rambled about to seek his father's asses, which had strayed, and finding all search after them in vain, applied to Samuel as a prophet, (1 Sam. ix. 7, 8.) with a fee in his hand, to gain intelligence of his beasts.

We gather from several passages in Jewish history, that there were seminaries of prophets, that is, the universities of the times where youth were trained up to the mystery of prophesying. We find there were false-prophets, non-conformists, not of the establishment ; we find that such could even impose upon true ones ; (1 Kings xiii. 18.) and we find moreover, by this instance, that prophets did not disdain to give assistance in their prophetic character, concerning domestic matters, for reasonable gratuities. A chief among the prophets, one who had been a judge over Israel, is applied to for intelligence concerning lost cattle. But Saul not only found his asses, but a kingdom into the bargain ; and had the spirit of the Lord given to him, (1 Sam. x. 6.) which we find taken away (ch. xvi. 14.) again, when he proved untractable ; though it seems somewhat odd, that he should prove disobedient, while he acted under the influence of this divine spirit !

After Samuel had in private (ch. x. 1.) anointed Saul king, and told him his asses were already found, he dismissed him. He next assembled the people for the election of a king : at which assembly, behold the lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin ; and in that, on the family of Matri ; and ultimately, on Saul the son of Kith. (v. 20, 21.) An election somewhat resembling consistories for the election of bishops ; where the person being previously fixed upon, they pray solemnly to God for a direction of their choice.

It is not intended here to give a detail of the reign of king Saul ; the notice hitherto taken of him being merely because the life of David could not be properly introduced without mentioning the cause of the alteration of government, and the manner in which monarchy was first established ; since Samuel's disappointment in Saul, naturally leads to his similar election of David.

The disobedience of Saul, in sparing one man, and some cattle, from a nation which Samuel in the name of the Lord commanded him utterly to extirpate, (1 Sam. xv. 3.) irrecoverably lost him the favor of this imperious creator of kings ; and in the end, produced the miserable destruction not only of himself, but of all his family ; which will occasion no surprise, when we consider the absolute dominion and ascendancy which the Jewish clergy maintained over this superstitious people.

We are not to imagine that the sparing of Agag, king of the Amalekites, was the only cause of the rupture between him and Samuel ; for we may gather from other parts of his history, that Saul was not overwell affected towards his patrons the Levites, (1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19, xxviii. 9,) whom he had too much spirit to continue under subjection to. This, however, was the occasion on which Samuel chose to declare

himself; he haughtily avowed an intention of deposing him; (ch. xv. 21. 26.) and ordering Agag to be brought into his presence, he hewed him in pieces, *before the Lord*.

We now come to the hero of the history.

In pursuance of his intention to make another king, Samuel goes, under the pretence of a sacrifice, and anoints another shepherd boy, (Sam. xvi. 13.) which was David, the youngest son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite; and gave him the spirit of the Lord, which he had just taken from poor Saul. The king in the mean time reflecting on the precariousness of his situation, now that the priests, in the person of Samuel, were exasperated against him; and well knowing their importance among his subjects, fell into a melancholy disorder of mind, which his physicians were unable to remove.—Josephus.

This was made the occasion of bringing David to court. The king was advised to divert himself with music; and it was contrived to recommend David to him for his skill on the harp. (Sam. xvi. 18.) Saul accordingly sent to Jesse, requesting to have his son; which was immediately complied with; and David was kept at court, in the capacity of the king's armor-bearer.

Here the story begins to grow confused, beyond *lay skill* to reconcile. A war with the Philistines is abruptly introduced; in the midst of the relation of which, we are as abruptly informed that David returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep again; from whence his father sent him with provision for his brothers, who were in the army. (v. 17.) What can we think of this? Jesse hardly recalled his son from the honorable post of armor-bearer to the king! It is not likely that he was turned off, since we afterwards find him playing on the harp to the king as before; neither was it a proper employment for the king's armor-bearer to be feeding sheep, when the army was in the field and his majesty with them in person! Why—the most easy method, is to take it as we find it; to suppose it to be right, and go quietly on with the story.

In the Philistine army was a man of extraordinary size, named Goliath; who came out of their camp, day by day, challenging and defying any one among the Hebrews to single combat, and to rest the decision of their quarrel upon the event of the battle between them; an offer which no one among the Israelites had hitherto been found hardy enough to accept. (1 Sam. xvii. 4, &c.) David arrived at the army just as it was forming for engagement; at which time the giant advanced as before, with reproachful menaces; and after inquiring carefully concerning what reward would be given to the conqueror of this giant, and finding that great riches and the king's daughter would be the prize of conquest, David courageously declared before Saul, his acceptance of the challenge, (1 Sam. xvii. 31.) notwithstanding the contempt with which his offer was treated.

Saul, relying on the youth's ardor, and assurance of victory, girded his own armour on him; but David put it off again, trusting entirely to a pouch of stones, and his own skill in slinging. The success answered his hopes, and stamped a rash undertaking with a more respectable name; he knocked Goliath down with a stone; then ran in upon him,

cut his head off with his sword, and brought it triumphantly to the king of Israel. The consequence was the defeat of the Philistines.

Here we meet with another stumbling block. For though Saul, as we have already observed, had sent to Jesse expressly for his son David; though David played to him on the harp; though Saul had again sent to Jesse, to desire that David might be permitted to stay with him; and in consequence of this had created him his armor-bearer; though he had now a fresh conference with him; had just put his own suit of armor on him: though all these occurrences must have happened within a small space of time, yet his memory is made to fail him so suddenly, that he knew nothing of David or his parentage! but while David went to meet the giant, he inquired of others, who proved as ignorant as himself, whose son the stripling was? This stumbling block we must likewise step over, for it is not to be removed.

The reputation which this gallant action procured to David, soon gained him advancement in the army, and a warm friendship with Saul's son Jonathan. But the inordinate acclamation of the people, on account of the death of the Philistine giant, *Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands*, a rhodomontade beyond measure extravagant, when we compare the two subjects of contrast—justly occasioned Saul to view David with a jealous eye. We have all the reason in the world to believe that Samuel and the priests made every possible advantage of an adventure so fortunate for their secondary king to improve his growing popularity, which event at its outset had so far exceeded all bounds of decency: *What, said Saul, can he have more but the kingdom?* And we may therefore conclude that the king saw enough to alarm him: for we are told, that *Saul eyed David from that day and forward*. Thus we find, that on the day following, while David played as usual on his harp before Saul, the king cast a javelin at him, which David avoided. Saul then made him a captain over a thousand; saying, *let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him*. He likewise made him the offer of his daughter Merab for his wife; but she, we know not why, was given to another, afterwards Michal; and David's modesty (v. 23.) on this occasion was incomparably well acted; he knowing himself, at the same time, to be secretly intended for the kingdom by Saul.

Saul, upon reflection, concluding it dangerous to execute any open act of violence against this young hero, cunningly hoped to ensnare him, by exalting him high in his favor; or to get rid of him by putting him upon his mettle, in performing feats of valor; for a deficiency of courage is not to be numbered among David's faults. It was with this view that the king yet required of him an hundred Philistine foreskins, (v. 25. according to Josephus, 600 heads) as the condition of his becoming his son-in-law.

Had presents of value been required, a man of ability and generosity might with a very good grace have overpaid the demand; but where the lives of men, even though enemies, are concerned, a person actuated by the feelings of humanity, would have adhered but to the exact number required. David, however, in this instance, gave the first proof of delight in blood, by producing double the number asked, *in full tale!*

(v. 27.) It argues nothing to plead the different manners of mankind, in those early and less civilized ages of the world; for, if he was *then* the man after God's own heart, *God is unalterable*: and always required that we should do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him.

David still advanced in his military reputation, (ch. xix. 8. 30.) and met with a powerful advocate in the person of Jonathan, his brother-in-law and faithful friend; who effected a temporary reconciliation between him and Saul; (1 Sam. xix. 4.) at which time Saul swore he would no more attempt his life. Nevertheless, whether it was that he could not get the better of his jealousy, or whether it was that he still discovered David intriguing with the priests, we know not; consequences incline to the latter conjecture. Saul made two more attempts to kill him, (Sam. xix. 10, 11.) from one of which he was protected by his wife Michal; and finding it not safe to stay at court, he fled to Samuel in Ramah. Hither Saul sent messengers to apprehend him, (v. 20.) but these it seems, seeing Samuel presiding over a company of prophets, and prophesying, were seized with the spirit of prophesying also; and not only so, but it is related, that Saul finding this, went at last himself to just the same purpose; for he likewise prophesied, (v. 23.) stripping himself naked, in which condition he continued for a day and a night.

This is an extremely odd relation! Had not the historian added the particulars concerning Saul, it might with great plausibility be supposed that David and the prophets had corrupted and bought off these emissaries which were sent after him; but when the king is said to have prophesied, and his prophesying to have been attended with such extravagant circumstances, as stripping himself, and lying in that condition for a day and a night! we in this case have no other mode of conception, but the supposition that the prophets knew how to inspire this bigoted people with occasional fits of enthusiastic frenzy! such fits, and such only, being able to produce extravagancies of this nature. Profane history, both ancient and modern, will suggest instances which will render this supposition probable. Had the subject of Saul's prophesying been transmitted down to us, it might have greatly illustrated this passage in the history; but no; he is barely said to have *prophesied*; which is a vague term, signifying sometimes a prediction of future events, and at others merely a delivery of pious orations, otherwise understood by the word *preaching*. But the spirit of God is *introduced* on all these occasions; this is said to have been upon Saul; and this is sufficient to stop all impertinent, inquisitive folks. Thus, after much ado about nothing, we leave it—just as we found it.

Afterwards David had a private interview with Jonathan, being afraid to appear at court. (1 Sam. xx. 1.) At this meeting, Jonathan, who had conceived too great an affection for this man, and was at length seduced by him from the duty and allegiance which he owed to his father and king, solemnly vowed, (v. 12.) that he would sound his father's intentions the next day, on which, being the festival of the new moon, David's attendance was expected at the king's table; and that he would warn him of any danger intended him. David lay hid in a field, until

Jonathan brought him the required intelligence; and when the king asked after him, Jonathan, as had been before concerted, said that he had requested leave to go and perform a family sacrifice at Bethlehem. Saul's reply on this occasion is very pertinent, and shews that his antipathy to David was not the causeless inveteracy of a disordered mind: "Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die." Jonathan expostulated with his father, and had a javelin hurled at him for his pains. [To be continued.]

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1828.

Pious Line of Stages.—We give publicity to the following address, because we are persuaded that the object contemplated by the projectors of the new line of steam-boats, canal-boats, and stages, is the overthrow of public liberty—a violation of the constitution of the United States, and involving the destruction of a most necessary, useful, and industrious class of our fellow citizens. It is high time, indeed, when bigots and fanatics arrogantly assume the right of dictation, that their base designs should be exposed and reprobated.

TO MERCHANTS.

The first encroachment on our religious or political liberties should be resisted with firmness. It is our duty to oppose and put down religious *cant* and *hypocrisy*, in whatever shape it may appear. It may not be generally understood, that an extensive combination of individuals has been forming in this state for the last four months, the object of which is to stop the running of Steam-Boats, Canal-Boats, Stages, and every vehicle for the conveyance of travellers or goods on the first day of the week, (called Sunday,) under a hypocritical mask of preventing a violation of the fourth Commandment to the Jews, which says, "the seventh day is the Sabbath." Yet such is the fact.

These misguided zealots threaten to take away all business from those lines that continue to run as heretofore, and to have the "finger of scorn" pointed at any man who may venture to travel on **THEIR** *holy day*. Violent efforts have been made to draw into this scheme all the different establishments for conveying merchandise or travellers, and as yet only one line of Canal-Boats has fallen into these measures. This is the HUDSON & ERIE LINE, belonging to Messrs. *Allen & Chapin*.

All friends to good order and morality, and enemies to *religious fraud*, it is presumed, will unite as "one man," and put down this anti-christian combination—formed expressly and avowedly for the purpose of breaking down any man *who does not read his Bible with their spectacles*—who shall venture to serve the community by transporting merchandise in the most expeditious manner. Remember the Hudson and

Erie Line of Boats lay up *on the first day of the week*, and of course cannot go as far in *six days* as other regular lines do in *seven*. Any man, or set of men, who lend their aid for the direct purpose of oppressing or coercing a community in their measures, forfeit their claim to public patronage.

Mr. Owen's System.—It will be seen by the following address of Mr. Owen, since his return to New Harmony, that the great barrier to the introduction of his philanthropic system, is *superstition*. We have always been of opinion, that religious prejudices would be the most formidable enemy he had to encounter. Indeed, we consider all the crime, misery, and wretchedness existing in society, as originating in that source; and until effectual measures are pursued, measures placed in every one's power, by supporting an unrestricted press, and by conferring a proper education on children, we are apprehensive that all other efforts to ameliorate the condition of man, will prove abortive. Much as has been already done to accomplish this great and desirable end, and rapidly as liberal principles are extending, the friends of truth have a wide field of action before them. The enemy are numerous and indefatigable; and above all, they possess the *means* of maintaining the power they have usurped over the human mind, of which they can only be deprived by the extensive diffusion of knowledge. Mr. Owen seems to think that the clergy will soon have their eyes opened to their true interests, and renounce their present pursuits. We have some doubts as to this. At all events, we are satisfied, that unless the character of the priesthood has undergone a radical change—unless these pretended “ambassadors of heaven” have become less arrogant and more honest than they have hitherto been, they will not abandon a profession, by which they continue to live in affluence and ease, without a more than ordinary struggle. The press is the great engine they dread, and that engine should never relax in its efforts to prostrate spiritual tyranny.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY ROBERT OWEN

At a public meeting of the inhabitants of New Harmony, on Sunday, April 13, 1828.

Since I left you, I have made another visit to the old world to see what had been doing there in my absence. I found the same overwhelming causes of distress in full activity that were in progress when I left it, and which causes had been continually advancing for several years previously. I mean inventions and discoveries to supersede manual labor in all the principal departments of life, and an increase of poverty among the producers of real wealth in proportion to the increase which had been made in these scientific improvements. Every step in this progress tends to accumulate large masses of useless wealth in the hands of a few individuals, and to withdraw it from the industrious producer.

The necessary consequence of a diminution of manual labor is an increase of crime; which again necessarily produces through all the ramifications of society, from the lowest to the highest, an increase of misery. The only remedy proposed in Great Britain by the united wis-

dom of its parliament, is to induce a spirit of emigration among the producing classes. And while the individual system shall prevail, a continued emigration will be their only relief.

The United States are following the example of Great Britain in its rapidity of production ; and they will soon experience many of its evils. The productions of this continent which are necessary to the best state of human existence, will very shortly be in such abundance as to exceed the demand for them ; and as soon as that period shall arrive, manual labor will decrease in value, and the non-producers will become the lords and oppressors. Experience has proved that the happiness of States is always in proportion to the equality of their population in knowledge and wealth ; but the system in progress in the United States tends to form an Aristocracy composed of the Priesthood, the Lawyers, and the wealthy ; and threatens to produce a state of society the least calculated to promote the general welfare and happiness of any population.

These are the evils to be guarded against. On the other hand, there are many reasons to rejoice in the prospect of the future. Owing to various causes, knowledge in the old as in the new world is making a silent yet sure progress among the mass of the people. The introduction of Infant Schools and Mechanic Institutes, and their almost daily increase in Great Britain, imperfect as the new modes of instruction are, is effecting such a gradual change in the minds of the superior producing classes as will enable them, ere long, to give a new and very different direction to the progress of inventions and discoveries which at present threaten to overwhelm them and their posterity.

Superstition, also, among the enlightened part of society, is rapidly on the decline ; Free-Press Associations are becoming popular, and the minds of the better informed among the middle classes are daily collecting strength to throw off the shackles of religious oppression, together with the deception and vice which these every where produce. A little longer, and the priesthood will have no influence over any portion of the population except the most ignorant, and those who are compelled to become hypocrites to gain elections into office to obtain a livelihood. No one but these will believe, or pretend to believe, that a Power infinitely wise and good, and who does all things by his might, should, knowing what he was about, make a devil to counteract his own operations, and create human beings to disobey his express wishes and commands. None but irrational beings could be made to believe, or rather to think they believe these or any such palpable contradictions and absurdities.

The time is at hand when the priesthood will discover that they individually suffer, and grievously too, by teaching mankind these degrading errors, and keeping men, in consequence, so profoundly ignorant as we find them at this day. They will, I conclude, now speedily perceive the mistake which they have made, and pursue a different and much wiser course. They must do so shortly, or they will find the whole of the intelligent part of society opposed to them. Let them instruct the people in real knowledge that might be of use to them, instead of filling their minds with imaginary notions of useless speculations about incomprehensible

superstitions, and they will then render their fellow-creatures a real and permanent service. At present they are a stumbling block in the way of every valuable improvement. They are an incubus, pressing the population of all countries down to the lowest point of mental degradation and vice, and rendering the rational faculties of mankind a continued curse to the world—those faculties which under a different direction might become an invaluable blessing.

The Priesthood will make this change in their conduct speedily, or they will prepare themselves to enter into an open mental conflict with the most intelligent and conscientious of the human race. It is my opinion that they will act rationally and adopt the former alternative, and every facility ought to be offered them to do so with the least inconvenience. The world had better pay them twice or ten times as much for instructing it in what is true, than pay them as it does at present for perpetuating ignorance, poverty, and vice, by destroying the reason of man.

From the facts and considerations which I have now stated, my conviction is, that the general progress of knowledge and decline of superstition among the people of Europe and the United States will speedily effect a great change for the better, in their condition. Men cannot proceed much farther in the acquisition of real knowledge, without discovering what things are necessary for human happiness and what is the shortest and best method to obtain them permanently; without being, as at present, dependent for them on the will of a few capricious wealthy individuals, who derive all their power and influence from the ignorance and industry of the many whom they oppress.

It is full time that these greivous evils should terminate. To hasten this period, I left Europe to come here where the greater freedom of the constitution on the subject of religion admitted experiments to be tried for the benefit of the human race, which could not be attempted, with any reasonable prospect of success, where superstition is the law of the land. I came here with a determination to try what could be effected in this new country to relieve my fellow men from superstition, and mental degradation; so that if successful, the experiment should be an example which all might follow, and by which all might benefit.

[To be Continued.]

New Liberal Papers.—Our Philadelphia correspondent writes that the liberal friends there are very energetic, and contemplate the establishment of a periodical work, to be entitled the "Herald of Truth, and Antisuperstitionist."

We also learn from Cincinnati, that since Mr. Gazley disposed of his interest in the *Teller*, that paper was entirely changed as respected liberal principles; in consequence of which, another paper, to be called "The March of Mind," was about to appear, in which the friends of truth would have "an opportunity to *skirmish* with the enemy, if they be unable to meet them in pitched battle."

Several *religious* papers have been lately sent us from the country; one of which, published at Boston, is entitled "A Cry from the Four Winds, in the cause of Religious Liberty, and against Clerical Intrigue,

and Ecclesiastical Oppression." Although the "Cry" is of a *sectarian* cast, we are glad to find the opinion so prevalent that it is absolutely necessary to assail the priesthood, if we wish to preserve our liberties. We perceive by the same paper, that it is in contemplation to establish a Society in Boston "for the free discussion of subjects of a religious nature, and for improvement in the art of reasoning and speaking. The ground on which this society will be founded, is the *Omnipotence of Truth*, and that the best way to advance it, is *free inquiry*."

Observance of Sunday.—The Corporation Attorney has been extremely active, of late, in getting up prosecutions against our citizens for what are called violations of Sunday. The law under which these proceedings are had, being considered *unconstitutional* by every unprejudiced person in the community, we are much pleased to find that measures are about to be taken to obtain the repeal of the obnoxious regulation. In our next, we shall notice a case tried under this law in one of our Ward Courts.

MISCELLANEOUS.

St. Simeon.—Heliodorus required Simeon to be more private in his mortifications "with this view," says Butler "judging the rough rope of the well, made of twisted palm tree leaves a proper instrument of penance, Simeon tied it close about his naked body, where it remained unknown both to the community and his superior, till such time as it having ate unto his flesh, what he had privately done was discovered by the effluvia proceeding from the wound." Butler says, that it took three days to disengage the saint's clothes, and that "the incisions of the physician, to cut the cord out of his body were attended with such anguish and pain, that he lay for some time as dead." After this he determined to pass the whole forty days of Lent in total abstinence, and retired to a hermitage for that purpose. Bassus, an abbot, left with him ten loaves and water, and coming to visit him at the end of the forty days, found both loaves and water untouched, and the saint stretched on the ground without signs of life. Bassus dipped a sponge in water, moistened his lips, gave him the eucharist, and Simeon by degrees swallowed a few lettuce leaves and other herbs. He passed twenty-six Lents in the same manner. In the first part of a Lent he prayed standing; growing weaker he prayed sitting; and towards the end being almost exhausted, he prayed lying on the ground. At the end of three years he left his hermitage for the top of a mountain, made an inclosure of loose stones, without a roof, and having resolved to live exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, he fixed his resolution by fastening his right leg to a rock with a great iron chain. Multitudes thronged to the mountain to receive his benediction, and many of the sick recovered their health; but as some were not satisfied unless they touched him in his inclosure, and Simeon desired retirement from the daily concourse, he projected a new and unprecedented manner of life. He erected a pillar six cubits high, (each cubit being eighteen inches,) and dwelt on it four

years ; on a second of twelve cubits high he lived three years ; on a third of twenty-two cubits high ten years ; and on a fourth of forty cubits, or sixty feet high which the people built for him, he spent the last twenty years of his life. This occasioned him to be called *stylites*, from the Greek word *stylos*, a pillar. This pillar did not exceed three feet in diameter at the top, so that he could not lie extended on it : he had no seat with him he only stooped or leaned to take a little rest, and bowed his body in prayer so often, that a certain person who counted these positions, found that he made one thousand two hundred and forty-four reverences in one day, which if he began at four o'clock in the morning and finished at eight o'clock at night, gives a bow to every three-quarters of a minute ; besides which he exhorted the people twice a day. His garments were the skins of beasts, he wore an iron collar round his neck, and had a horrible ulcer in his foot. During his forty days' abstinence throughout Lent, he tied himself to a pole. He treated himself as an outcast of the world and the worst of sinners, worked miracles, delivered prophecies, had the sacrament delivered to him on the pillar, and died bowing upon it, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, after having lived upon pillars for six and thirty years.

Near Simeon's pillar was the dwelling of a dragon, so very venomous, that nothing grew near his cave. This dragon met with an accident ; he had a stake in his eye, and coming all blind to the saint's pillar, and placing his eye upon it for three days without doing harm to any one, Simeon ordered earth and water to be placed on the dragon's eye, which being done, out came the stake, a cubit in length ; when the people saw this, they glorified God, and ran away for fear of the dragon, who arose and adored for two hours, and returned to his cave. A woman swallowed a little serpent, which tormented her for many years, till she came to Simeon, who causing earth and water to be laid on her mouth, the little serpent came out four feet and a half long. It is affirmed by the Golden Legend, that when Simeon died, Anthony smelt a precious odor proceeding from his body ; that the birds cried so much, that both men and beasts cried ; that an angel came down in a cloud ; that the patriarch of Antioch taking Simeon's beard to put among his relics, his hand withered, and remained so till multitudes of prayers were said for him, and it was healed : and that more miracles were worked at and after Simeon's sepulchre, than he had wrought all his life.

The Jews.—Selden says, "Talk what you will of the Jews, that they are cursed, they thrive wherever they come : they are able to oblige the prince of their country by lending him money ; none of them beg ; they keep together ; and for their being hated, my life for yours, Christians hate one another as much." This was true, but it is also true that three quarters of a century have not elapsed since hatred to the Jews was a national feeling. In 1753 a bill was brought into the House of Lords for naturalizing the Jews and relieving them from persecuting disabilities. It passed there on the ground that it would operate to the public advantage, by encouraging wealthy persons professing the Jewish religion to remove hither from foreign parts to the increase of the capital, commerce, and credit of the kingdom. The corporation of London in com-

mon council assembled, petitioned against it on the ground that it would dishonor the christian religion, endanger the constitution, and prejudice the interest and trade of the kingdom in general, and London in particular. A body of London merchants and traders also petitioned against it. Certain popular orators predicted that the bill passed, the Jews would multiply so fast, become so rich, and get so much power, that their persons would be revered, their customs be imitated, and Judaism become the fashionable religion; they further alleged that the bill flew in the face of prophecy, which declared that the Jews should be scattered without a country or fixed habitation till their conversion, and that in short it was the duty of Christians to be unchristian. But the bill passed the commons after violent debates, and received the royal sanction. The nation was instantly in a ferment of horror and execration; and on the first day of the next session of parliament, ministers were constrained to bring in a bill to repeal the act of naturalization, and to the foul dishonor of the people of England at that period, the bill was repealed. From that hour to the present, the Jews have been subjected to their old pains, penalties, disqualifications, and privations. The enlightenment of this age has dispelled much of the darkness of the last. Yet the errors of public opinion then respecting the Jews, remain to be rectified now by the solemn expression of a better public opinion. Formerly, if one of the "ancient people" had said in the imploring language of the slave, "Am I not a *man*, and a brother?" he might have been answered, "No; you are not a *man*, but a *Jew*. It is not the business of the Jews to petition for justice, but it is the duty of Christians to be just.

Baptism.—How strange an idea—that a pot of water should wash away every crime? Now all children are baptised, because an idea no less absurd supposes them all criminal; they are all saved until they have the use of reason, and the power to become guilty! Cut their throats, then, as quickly as possible, to ensure their entrance into paradise. This is so just a consequence, that there was once a devout sect that went about poisoning and killing all newly-baptised infants. These devout persons reasoned with perfect correctness, saying—"We do these little innocents the greatest possible good; we prevent them from being wicked and unhappy in this life, and we give them life eternal."

Free Press Association.—The meetings of this Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 18th inst, at half past 10 o'clock forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

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